

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 02835 250255Z

15

ACTION OES-04

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 PM-04 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 247

INFO NSF WASHDC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE WELLINGTON 2835

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TPHY NZ

SUBJ: VERY LOW FREQUENCY (VLF) TRANSMISSION EXPERIMENT

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. EMBASSY HAS BEEN INFORMED BY PROFESSOR RICHARD DARDEN, PHYSICS DEPT., OTAGO UNIVERSITY, THAT HIS DEPARTMENT, IN COOPERATION WITH AEROSPACE CORP., IS PLANNING VLF TRANSMISSION EXPERIMENT FOR MAY, JUNE AND JULY 1976. TRANSMITTER TO BE LOCATED NEAR DUNEDIN WITH RECEIVERS IN ALASKA. EXPERIMENT COMPLEMENTS TESTS MADE IN 1972 WHEN TRANSMITTER WAS IN ALASKA AND RECEIVER IN DUNEDIN. DARDEN UNDERSTANDS PROJECT WILL BE FINANCED, IN PART, BY NSF GRANT. PROJECT LEADER IS DR. HARRY KOONS OF AEROSPACE CORP., P.O. BOX 92957, LOS ANGELES.

2. PRIMARY REASON FOR DARDEN'S CALL WAS TO REQUEST EMBASSY'S OPINION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT OFFICIAL GNZ APPROVAL FOR PROJECT SHOULD BE REQUESTED. WE BELIEVE THIS WILL BE NECESSARY, BUT MUST WITHHOLD FINAL JUDGMENT UNTIL FULL DETAILS OF EXPERIMENT INCLUDING USG INVOLVEMENT KNOWN. REQUEST DEPARTMENT INFORM DR. KOONS OF THIS OPINION AND ASK HIM TO SEND FULL BACKGROUND DATA ON PROJECT TO EMBASSY WELLINGTON ASAP.

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3. IN PAST, VLF EXPERIMENTS HAVE BEEN STRONGLY CRITICIZED BY LEFT-WING GROUPS IN NEW ZEALAND AS CONTRIBUTING TO IMPROVEMENT IN US CAPABILITY TO COMMUNICATE WITH SUBMERGED SUBMARINES. LEFT-WING LOGIC THEN CONTINUES TO THE EFFECT THAT IN AIDING EXPERIMENTS GNZ ASSISTING IN DEVELOPMENT OF SUBMARINE NUCLEAR ATTACK CAPABILITY, THEREBY ENCOURAGING ARMS RACE. IN VIEW OF THIS RADICAL ELEMENT, WE BELIEVE GNZ WILL WANT TO BE FULLY INFORMED ON ALL ASPECTS OF PROJECT IN ORDER TO BE PREPARED TO RESPOND TO INEVITABLE ATTACKS WHICH WILL BE LEVELED AGAINST EXPERIMENT.
SELDEN

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